for providing compulsory pre-litigative mechanism for conciliation and settlement of cases relating to public utility services.

(d) The National Legal Services Authority or the State Legal Services Authority, as the case may be, may establish permanent Lok Adalat at such places and in such numbers as may be expedient to enable the Lok Adalats to exercise its jurisdiction in respect of one or more public utility services as necessary from time to time.

(e) The permanent Lok Adalats would have jurisdiction regarding public utility services such as transport (air, road, water), postal, telegraph or telephone, power, water, sanitation, hospitals and insurance. To avoid prolonged litigation it has also been proposed that the award made by the Lok Adalat shall be final, binding and shall not be questioned in any original suit, application or execution proceeding. The jurisdiction of the Lok Adalats would, however, be limited to cases upto a monetary value of Rs. 10 lakhs.

(f) It is not possible to quantify the reduction in the Court cases at present.

Mahila Courts

403. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether justice still eludes women who are victims of atrocities like dowry harassment, molestation and rape;

(b) if so, whether Government had set up "Mahila Courts" to specially deal with such cases;

(c) whether the conviction rate in very poor and the number of atrocity cases being registered are spiralling every year;

(d) if so, the reasons therefor indicating the number of cases pending as on 31st January, 2002, Statewise; and

(e) the steps Government propose to take to expedite the disposal of cases of atrocities against women?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Yes, Sir.

Women Courts have been constituted in the States of Andhra Pradesh Karnataka, Rajasthan and NCT of Delhi.

(c) No, Sir.

As per the information available, the number of cases which were registered and in which conviction was awarded in respect of crimes against women during 1997-1999 in as under:—

Year	Cases registered	Cases in which Conviction awarded	Percentage
1997	121265	24866	21% (Approx.)
1998	131475	24079	18% "
1999	135771	27914	21% "

(d) The requisite information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

(e) Various steps have been taken by the Government for early disposal of pending cases including cases pending in Women Courts. These include increase in Judge strength, establishment of Special Courts/Tribunals, appointment of Special Judicial/Metropolitan Magistrates, adoption of alternative modes of dispute resolution, such as, arbitration and conciliation and recourse to summary trials. Eighty Five Family Courts have been set up in the country for reconciliation and adjudication of matrimonial cases.

Judiciary is also taking various measures to expedite disposal of cases in courts including cases involving women. The High Courts are separately monitoring matrimonial cases.

The National Commission for Women (NCW) was constituted in January, 1992 as a statutory apex level body to monitor the implementation of Constitutional and legal provisions for safeguarding the interests of women. It receives complaints relating to dowry/atrocity cases, dowry related suicides/ death/murder. These cases are duly processed in the Commission under Sections 10(1)(f)(g) and 10(f) of the NCW Act, 1990 and referred to the appropriate authorities, such as Police, District Magistrates, etc. with the Commission's recommendations for expediting action under the criminal laws and bringing the guilty persons to trial in the court.

Various State Governments have also taken steps, *viz.* establishment of Special Cells to deal with crime against women, setting up of Women Police Stations and Women's Cells in Police Stations, appointment of Women Police Officers, gender sensitization of Police personnel, etc. In addition, some State Governments are in the process of setting up Women Courts for exclusive trial of cases involving women.

Fast Track Courts in Karnataka

404. SHRI K.C. KONDAIAH: Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Fast Track Courts, so far, set up in the country;

(b) the number of such courts earmarked for Karnataka;

(c) the number of such courts, so far, set up in Bangalore and other parts of Karnataka;

(d) the amount of grant released to Karnataka for this purpose;

(e) the number of civil cases disposed of by these courts in Karnataka; and

(f) the places where these courts are proposed to be set up in Karnataka during 2002-2003?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY): (a) As per available information, 1015 Fast Track Courts have been set up in the country as on 31st January, 2002.

(b) 93 Fast Track Courts have been earmarked for Karnataka.

(c) So far 13 Fast Track Courts have been set up in Karnataka, including three in Bangalore.

(d) A grant of Rs. 10.87 crore has already been released to the State of Karnataka by the Ministry of Finance for this purpose.

(e) Only sessions cases have been transferred to the Fast Track Courts in Karnataka and therefore, no civil case has been disposed of by any Fast Track Court in Karnataka.

(f) It is for the State Government, in consultation with the High Court to set up these courts. However, the Department of Justice is periodically taking